



DAME NELLIE MELBA  
KINDERGARTEN  
EST 1915

# **Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy**

## **Mandatory – Quality Area 4**



## PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for the engagement and participation of volunteers and students at [Service Name], while ensuring that children’s health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### VALUES

[Service Name] is committed to:

- supporting connections with educational institutions to provide opportunities for students to undertake practicum placements as part of their studies
- building relationships with community members and providing suitable opportunities to engage volunteers to contribute to the programs and activities of the service
- ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of each child at the service through consistent compliance with this policy and procedures when engaging volunteers and students.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of [Service Name], including during offsite excursions and activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
<b>R</b> indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Developing guidelines for accepting applications from volunteers and students to work at the service in consultation with the nominated supervisor, ECT and educators and which are aligned with the <i>Child Safe Environment Policy</i>	√	√	√		
Accepting or rejecting a potential volunteer or student based on the circumstances of the service at the time, in consultation with the nominated supervisor	√	√			
Obtaining a valid WWC Check ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) and providing details to the service prior to commencement					√
Checking the status of the Working with Children (WWC) Clearance ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) of volunteers and students where	<b>R</b>	√			

required, and ensuring that the details are recorded in the staff record					
Ensuring that the staff record contains the name, address and date of birth of volunteers and students attending the service <i>(Regulations 145, 149(1))</i>	R	√			
Keeping a record for each day on which each student or volunteer participates with the date and the hours of participation <i>(Regulation 149(2))</i>	R	√			
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are adequately supervised at all times, and that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected	R	√	√		
Following the directions of staff at the service at all times to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of children is protected.				√	√
Ensuring volunteers and students on placement at the service are not affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair their capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children <i>(Regulation 83) (refer to Tobacco, Alcohol and other Drugs Policy)</i>	R	√	√	√	√
Providing volunteers, students and parents/guardians with access to all service policies and procedures <i>(Regulation 171)</i> , and access to the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and Education and Care Services National Law (Regulation 185)</i>	R	√			
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians comply with the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> and all service policies and procedures <i>(Regulations 170)</i>	R	√	√	√	√
Complying with the requirements of the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Education and Care Services National Law (Regulation 185)</i> and with all service policies and procedures, including the <i>Code of Conduct Policy, Child Safe Environment</i> and <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> while attending the service				√	√
Ensuring that volunteers, students and parents/guardians are aware of how to comply with child protection law and Child Safe Standards obligations	R	√		√	
Identifying children with medical conditions, the child's medical management plan and the location of the child's medication <i>(Regulations 90, 168(2)(d))</i>	R	√	√		
Informing volunteers, students and parents/guardians of the services emergency and evacuation procedures <i>(Regulations 97, 168 (2)(e))</i>	R	√	√		
Developing an induction checklist for volunteers and students attending the service <i>(refer to Attachment 1)</i> in consultation with the nominated supervisor and educators.	R	√	√		
Ensuring that volunteers and students have completed the induction checklist <i>(refer to Attachment 1)</i> and have been provided with a copy of the staff handbook, if applicable.	R	√	√		√

Developing a range of strategies to enable and encourage the participation and involvement of parents/guardians at the service	√	√			
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## BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

### BACKGROUND

Students may participate in programs and activities at the service from time to time including observing and experiencing the provision of centre-based education and care. This will be encouraged and facilitated by [Service Name] wherever appropriate and possible.

[Service Name] values the participation of parents/guardians and other family members, and the voluntary contribution they make to the education and care of their own and other children. “In genuine partnerships families and educators value each other’s knowledge and roles, communicate freely and respectfully and engage in shared decision making” (Early Years Learning Framework – *refer to Sources*).

[Service Name] aims to provide a range of opportunities for family members, volunteers and students to participate in programs and activities while adhering to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interactions and communication with staff, and other adults and children at the service (*refer to Code of Conduct Policy*).

The role that volunteers and students play in education and care services varies and can include working with groups of children, preparing materials or food, assisting with administrative tasks or working one-on-one with individual children. The service is responsible for ensuring that volunteers and students are suitable to work with children, and that children’s health, safety and wellbeing is protected at all times.

Volunteers should only be engaged to complement, not replace, the work of paid staff. Accordingly, services should not engage volunteers to fill the place of an employee who is ill or on leave, or to fill a vacant budgeted position.

Volunteers must not be asked to perform tasks:

- that they are untrained, unqualified or too inexperienced to undertake
- that put the children or themselves in a vulnerable or potentially unsafe situation
- where there is a conflict of interest.

Prior to participation at the service, a volunteer or student (aged 18 years or over) must be in possession of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance (*refer to Definitions*).

Parents/guardians whose children usually attend the service are exempt from needing a WWC Check (*refer to Definitions*). However, a service may decide, as a demonstration of duty of care, that all parents/guardians who volunteer at the service are required to undergo a WWC Check (*refer to Definitions*).

In line with Child Safe Standard 4 and the *Child Safe Environment Policy*, prior to engaging a volunteer or student an assessment should be undertaken of the nature of the responsibility to determine whether a position description is required and based on that whether an interview and referee checks are required.

### LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Child Safe Standards
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)
- Worker Screening Regulation 2021 (Vic)

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## DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved provider, Nominated supervisor, Notifiable complaints, Serious incidents, Duty of care, etc. refer to Attachment 2

**Child-related work:** In relation to the WWC Check (*refer to Definitions*), child-related work includes work with children which may involve physical contact, face-to-face contact, oral, written or electronic communication.

**Conflict of interest:** (In relation to this policy) refers to an interest that may affect, or may appear reasonably likely to affect, the judgement or conduct of the volunteer, or may impair their independence or loyalty to the service. A conflict of interest can arise from avoiding personal losses as well as gaining personal advantage, whether financial or otherwise, and may not only involve the volunteer, but also their relatives, friends or business associates

**Student:** A person undertaking a practicum placement as part of a recognised early childhood qualification. This student will be supported by an educational institution in the completion of their placement.

**Volunteer:** A person or parent (who's child attends the service) who willingly undertakes defined activities to support the education and care programs at a service in an unpaid or honorary capacity. These activities may include child-related work (*refer to Definitions*), administrative tasks, or preparing materials or food.

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## SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### SOURCES

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA): [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being, Becoming:* [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation (The Commission for Children and Young People) [www.cryp.vic.gov.au](http://www.cryp.vic.gov.au)
- Working with Children Check unit, Department of Justice & Regulation – provides details of how to obtain a WWC Check: [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au)

### RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Code of Conduct
- Compliments and Complaints
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Determining Responsible Person
- Inclusion and Equity
- Interactions with Children
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Staffing

- Supervision of Children
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## EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- check staff records on a regular basis to ensure details of students, volunteers and where appropriate parents/guardians are maintained in line with all legislative requirements as outlined in the policy
  - regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
  - monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
  - keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
  - revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
  - notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).
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## ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Sample induction checklist for volunteers and students
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## AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of [Service Name] on June 2023

**REVIEW DATE:** June 2025

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## ATTACHMENT 1. SAMPLE INDUCTION CHECKLIST FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To be completed by all volunteers and students participating at [Service Name] and returned to the nominated supervisor prior to commencing at the service.

Volunteer/Student	Please tick
I have been given access to all the policies and procedures of [Service Name], [Delete if not applicable]	
I understand the content of service policies and procedures, including those relating to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conduct while at the service (<i>Code of Conduct Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>emergency, evacuation, fire and safety, including locations of fire extinguishers and emergency exits (<i>Emergency and Evacuation Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accidents at the service (<i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dealing with medical conditions (<i>Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, Asthma Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, Diabetes Policy, Epilepsy Policy and Administration of Medication Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>good hygiene practices (<i>Hygiene Policy and Food Safety Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dealing with infectious diseases (<i>Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>first aid arrangements for children and adults, including the location of the nearest first aid kit (<i>Administration of First Aid Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>daily routines</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the importance of OHS and following safe work practices (<i>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interacting appropriately with children (<i>Interactions with Children Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reporting of serious incidents and notifiable incidents at the service (<i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reporting hazards in the workplace (<i>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>handling complaints and grievances (<i>Compliments and Complaints Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>child safety and wellbeing and child protection including how to respond to concerns (<i>Child Safe Environment Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>privacy and confidentiality of information (<i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	

Volunteer/Student	Please tick
I am aware of the non-smoking policy of the service and not be affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) that would impair my capacity to complete my tasks ( <i>Tobacco, Alcohol, and other Drugs Policy</i> )	
The expectations of my placement/engagement, my role and responsibilities (including attending to the requirements of children with additional needs) have been clearly explained to me by my supervisor	
I am aware that I am expected to participate in general tasks, including maintaining the environment in a clean, safe and tidy condition	

Volunteer or student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated Supervisor's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Attachment 2

### General Policy Definitions

**Approved Provider:** An individual or organisation that has completed an application and been approved by the Regulatory Authority as fit and proper (in accordance with Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the National Law) to operate one or more education and care services. Where the applicant is an organisation, each person with management and control (see definition below) of that organisation must complete a separate application form. (Note: Under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, Section 5, Definitions: “**person with management or control**, in relation to an education and care service, means – (b) if the provider of the service is an eligible association, each member of the executive committee of the association who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service”.)

**Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA):** The national authority established to oversee the National Quality Framework and guide its implementation in a consistent way throughout Australia.

**Department of Education and Training (DET):** The Victorian State Government department with Primary responsibility for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in Victoria in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the *National Quality Standards*

**Early childhood teacher:** A person with an approved early childhood teaching qualification as listed on the ACECQA website [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

**Educational Leader:** The Approved Provider of an education and care service must designate, in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual to lead the development and implementation of education programs at the service (Regulation 118). This person must have a thorough understanding of the Early Years Learning Framework (or other approved learning framework), be able to guide other educators in their planning and reflection, and mentor colleagues in their implementation practices.

**Educator:** An individual who is qualified to provide education and care for children as part of an education and care service.

**Learning frameworks:** Under the National Quality Framework (NQF), education and care services are required to ensure that the program delivered to all children being cared for and educated by the service is based on and delivered in a manner that accords with an approved learning framework. In Victoria, the approved frameworks are:

- ☐ *Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)*
- ☐ *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)*
- ☐ *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia.*

**National Law:** Refers to the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: the national law regulating education and care services for children.

**National Quality Framework (NQF):** This framework for the early childhood education and care sector helps providers to improve the quality of services in areas that impact on a child’s development. The framework includes:

- ☐ a National Law – the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- ☐ National Regulations – the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (please check online to ensure the most current version is being used)
- ☐ the National Quality Standard
- ☐ an assessment and rating system
- ☐ a Regulatory Authority in each state and territory with primary responsibility for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in their jurisdiction in accordance with the national legislative framework and in relation to the National Quality Standard
- ☐ the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). The national body responsible for providing oversight of the system and ensuring consistency of approach.

**National Quality Standard (NQS):** The NQS sets a National benchmark for the quality of children’s education and care services. The NQS is comprised of guiding principles, quality areas, standards and elements. There are seven quality areas which capture aspects critical to the provision of quality education and care.

**National Regulations:** Refers to the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: the regulations or rules under which education and care services must operate. The regulations are the way in which the law is applied.

**Nominated Supervisor:** A person who has been nominated by the Approved Provider of the service under Part 3 of the Act and who has consented to that nomination in writing can be the Nominated Supervisor. All services must have a Nominated Supervisor with responsibility for the service in accordance with the National Regulations. The Approved Provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the Nominated Supervisor is a fit and proper person (in accordance with Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the National Law), with suitable skills, qualifications and experience. The Regulatory Authority must be notified if the Nominated Supervisor for the service changes, or is no longer employed at the service.

**Person with management or control:** Means— (a) if the provider or intended provider of the service is a body corporate, an officer of the body corporate within the meaning of the Corporations Act 2001 of the Commonwealth who is responsible for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or (b) if the provider of the service is an eligible association, each member of the executive committee of the association who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or (c) if the provider of the service is a partnership, each partner who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service; or (d) in any other case, a person who has the responsibility, alone or with others, for managing the delivery of the education and care service (Note: Under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*, Section 5).

**Person in day-to-day charge:** A person is in day-to-day charge if (a) the person is placed in day-to-day charge by the approved provider or a nominated supervisor of the education and care service after meeting the definition for a service supervisor certificate: and (b) the person consents to the placement in writing (Regulation 54)

**Policy:** A formal statement of principles which provides a framework for decision-making and indicates the course of action to be taken in specific circumstances. Policies provide services with an approved way of operating in relation to particular matters and improve the management of risk. They reflect the values and

beliefs of a service, current thinking, national standards and community expectations, and are relevant in terms of current laws and regulations.

**Procedures:** The steps required to implement and comply with a policy. Procedures specify how to achieve the necessary result by outlining who does what and when. Procedures are succinct, factual and to the point, and are generally expressed as a list.

**Program:** The group/activity in which a child is enrolled and which has specific hours of attendance.

**Regulatory Authority:** see definition for the Department of Education and Training.

**Responsible Person:** The Approved Provider (if that person is an individual, and in any other case the person with management or control of the service operated by the Approved Provider) or a Nominated Supervisor or person who has been placed in day-to-day charge of the service in accordance with the National Regulations.

**Service Supervisor Certificates:** On 1st November 2016 the National Regulations were amended to expand the classes of people who may be covered by a prescribed class supervisor certificate.

The new prescribed classes are set out in regulation 238A, and include a person who is:

- ☐ *responsible for day to day management of the service, or*
- ☐ *exercising supervisory and leadership responsibilities for part of the service, or*
- ☐ *a family day care coordinator*

Certificates issued for people working in one of these roles are referred to as “*service supervisor certificates*”.

Service supervisor certificates will not be issued to a particular person. Instead they may apply to any person working at the service who has been identified by the approved provider as working in one of the above roles.

For example, if the service director is responsible for day to day management of the service, they can be covered under the service supervisor certificate. Similarly, a room leader who is responsible for supervising part of the service can also be covered by the service supervisor certificate.

With this new flexibility, most individuals do not need to apply to the regulatory authority for a supervisor certificate.

Under these arrangements, a person is covered under the service supervisor certificate and may be a nominated supervisor if:

- ☐ the approved provider identifies that they meet the definition for a service supervisor certificate and
- ☐ they give their written consent to be the nominated supervisor (required under sections 35, 44 and regulation 56).

Nominated supervisors have specific obligations under the National Law (See Nominated Supervisors above).

A person is covered and may be placed in day to day charge of the service if:

- ☐ the approved provider or the nominated supervisor identifies that they meet the definition for a service supervisor certificate and
- ☐ they give their written consent to be placed in day to day charge of the service (required under regulation 54).

These arrangements apply for centre based and family day care services, and make it easier for providers to meet the requirements to ensure that:

☐ for centre based services, either the approved provider, nominated supervisor or certified supervisor in day to day charge is present at the service at all times the service is educating and caring for children (section 162) and

☐ for family day care services, either the approved provider, nominated supervisor or a certified supervisor in day to day charge is available at all times to support family day care educators

**Staff:** Any individual (other than the Nominated Supervisor or a volunteer) employed, appointed or engaged to work in or as part of an education and care service.